787 826 denotes that a friend is speaking well of one: a tingling of the left, implying the opposite.

[177] The opinion, from whence this proverbial saying is derived, is of great antiquity, being thus mentioned by Pliny: "Moreover is not this an opinion generally received that when our ears do glow and tingle some there be that in our absence do talk of us?"

MEETING OF WOMEN

• 846 787 777 If two women who have been confined on the same day meet before forty days, one of them will suffer some misfortune either in her own person or in that of her child.

THE MONTH OF MAY

777 May is considered as the month of accidents, and consequently many be-

8:Brockman T-5 (no date) 1938
EZ6 Malta EZ6

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it the Birthday of the Solar Disc; but Christ is the Sun of Righteousness' " (S. HEATH, *Romance of Symbolism*).[1]

We cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, connect the vampire *Gaugau* with Christianity; but with Mithra the affair becomes quite different. It is not difficult to connect a child born on the eve of the Birth-feast of the bloodthirsty Mithra with something more terrible than "ghostly pranks." It is comforting to hear that the vampire *Gaugau* is now capable of nothing worse than "frightening people with his groanings!"

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There was a time before the dread broom of "Progress" began to sweep all peasant customs—good as well as bad—before it, when the newly-delivered mother kept carefully to her house during forty days for fear of meeting another mother who had been confined on the same day. It was believed that of two such women meeting within forty days of their confinement, one would suffer a great misfortune. Two possible reasons for this quaint prohibition are apparent. It was either some remnant of a primitive, levitical period of purification or a means of ensuring that the mother wasted no time gossiping at the doorway or in the market place, to the neglect of her young family.

[174]

GROWING UP

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With the child's first birthday comes the *'uccija*, or "choosing." A tray or basket is filled with an assortment of articles representing trades and professions—a book, a rosary, a candle, an inkstand, a sword—whichever the baby first picks up will indicate its bent in life. This simple means of divination is widespread, and little need be said of it except that some grains of corn are sometimes introduced as a symbol of generosity, suggesting that at one time the *'uccija* decided

[1] H. BAYLEY, *The Lost Language of Symbolism*.